

I Have Remembered My Covenant

By Dan & Brenda Cathcart

The video version is available at: <https://youtu.be/QyoUO2oOIYA>

The scripture reading is Exodus 6:2-8

Brenda and I have been studying God's word by following the published Torah portions for over 12 years now, and as I was reading this week's portion, something stood out for me like it had not done before. It opens with God speaking to Moses.

Exodus 6:2-3 NKJV 2 And God spoke to Moses and said to him: "I am the LORD. 3 "I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as God Almighty, but by My name LORD I was not known to them.

What is God revealing to Moses? Did Abraham, Isaac and Jacob not really know God? Or know Him in some lesser or superficial way? Is this a new, previously unknown name that God is revealing to Moses? Or is it a matter of God's continued revelation of Himself to mankind? Perhaps it is all of these things and more.

In this opening statement, God is telling Moses that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob only knew Him by the name El Shaddai. We normally translate these two words to English as God Almighty. First Fruits of Zion in Shadows of the Messiah comments on the patriarchs understanding of God's name:

"The LORD did not reveal the meaning of His name to the patriarchs. They knew Him primarily as El Shaddai, the All-Sufficient One, but to Moses, He revealed Himself as the unchanging promise-keeping God who keeps the covenant He made with the forefathers."ⁱ

The word Almighty is shadday, number 7706 in the Strong's concordance meaning Almighty. It is from the primitive root word shaw-dad number 7703 meaning a number of things depending on the context in which it is used. In the context of this name for God it means powerful, therefore it is translated as almighty.

The other word preceding Shadday is El, number 401 meaning strength. Both words seem to roughly mean the same thing, but as a name for God, El is not unique. In the ancient Near East, the name El, or forms of it, was assigned to what these varying cultures referred to as the King of the gods, or the God above other gods in their pantheon of gods. The concept of a single God who was superior to other lesser gods was not a foreign concept among these ancient peoples. They recognized that there was a single God at the head of all other gods, even viewing this greater God as the creator.

Although used previously in the scriptures, God is now empowering Moses with a new understanding of God's identity along with the name LORD. God began to reveal Himself to Moses while he was tending the flocks of his Father-in-law. Moses encounters God at the burning bush. At the end of this encounter, Moses asks of the LORD who he should tell the children of Israel had sent him to them.

Exodus 3:13-14 NKJV 13 Then Moses said to God, "Indeed, when I come to the children of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they say to me, 'What is His name?' what shall I say to them?" 14 And God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And He said, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'"

The name "I Am Who I Am" is a double word or repeated word in the Hebrew. The word is Hayah, number 1961 meaning to exist, to be or become. Hayah is the root word of Yehovah. When we see LORD in all capital letters in our English Bibles, it is translated from the Hebrew word Yeh-ho-vah, number 3068 meaning self-

existent or eternal. On occasion Yeh-ho-vah is translated as Jehovah or Yahweh. The Bible's use of LORD in all capitol letters is probably done in recognition of the Jewish practice of not pronouncing or writing this name by substituting something else in its place. Most Jewish tradition uses the phrase H'Shem, or in English, The Name. We will observe that this is the name of God used in the scripture in relation to God's redemptive work.

When Moses and Aaron first approach Pharaoh to request that he let the children of Israel go, Moses uses the name Yehovah, or LORD. Pharaoh refuses to let them go, stating that he does not know who the LORD is.

Exodus 5:1-2 NKJV 1 Afterward Moses and Aaron went in and told Pharaoh, "Thus says the LORD God of Israel: 'Let My people go, that they may hold a feast to Me in the wilderness.'" 2 And Pharaoh said, "Who is the LORD, that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I do not know the LORD, nor will I let Israel go."

Following this first encounter between Moses and Pharaoh, life for the children of Israel got many times worse.

Exodus 5:20-21 NKJV 20 Then, as they came out from Pharaoh, they met Moses and Aaron who stood there to meet them. 21 And they said to them, "Let the LORD look on you and judge, because you have made us abhorrent in the sight of Pharaoh and in the sight of his servants, to put a sword in their hand to kill us."

As God speaks to Moses in the opening verses of chapter 6, God reminds Moses that He has not forgotten his covenant with Abraham, nor has He forgotten His commitment to the children of Israel.

Exodus 6:4-5 NKJV 4 "I have also established My covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage, in which they were strangers. 5 "And I have also heard the groaning of the children of Israel whom the Egyptians keep in bondage, and I have remembered My covenant.

By this time, it had been several hundred years since the promise of the inheritance of the Land of Canaan was first given to Abraham. Generations had come and gone, and the promise remained unfulfilled. The time had come for God to reveal his redemption plan and fulfill this promise to the descendants of Jacob.

God instructs Moses to reveal a new name and Identity of God to the children of Israel. In so doing, God reveals his plan of redemption.

Exodus 6:6-7a NKJV 6 "Therefore say to the children of Israel: 'I am the LORD; I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, I will rescue you from their bondage, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. 7 'I will take you as My people, and I will be your God.

We can see a chiasmic structure to these reminders and promises reiterated to Moses in these verses. We will look at this overall chiasm at the end of this teaching.

There are seven specific promises that God is revealing to Moses in these verses. Eight if you count the repetition at the end with "I am the LORD." Let's break it down to the components.

In verses 6 and 7 we get a hint of the Passover that is yet to be established. In the Passover celebrated each year, there are four cups of wine consumed in the course of the ceremonial meal. Each cup represents a different aspect of redemption or salvation, and through them we get a picture of the ultimate redemption provided by Messiah Yeshua.

The first cup, which begins the Passover Seder, is called the "Cup of Sanctification." It is based on part of verse six, "I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians."

In His final Passover with His disciples, Yeshua made a declaration over this cup. Luke records the opening of this final Seder.

Luke 22:15-17 NKJV 15 Then He said to them, "With fervent desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; 16 "for I say to you, I will no longer eat of it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." 17 Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, "Take this and divide it among yourselves;

Sanctification implies a separation from the things of the world, from the things that are ordinary. When we observe the Sabbath and set it apart from the other ordinary days, we are acknowledging that God sanctified the Sabbath. God also sanctifies all believers by taking us out of the burdens of this world and out of our sin, setting us apart for service to Him. The apostle Paul speaks of the Gentiles being sanctified and set apart as well.

Romans 15:15-16 NKJV 15 Nevertheless, brethren, I have written more boldly to you on some points, as reminding you, because of the grace given to me by God, 16 that I might be a minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

Through Messiah Yeshua, God has taken all of us out of the kingdom of darkness into His light!

The second cup of the Seder shortly follows the telling of the story of the exodus and is in remembrance of deliverance. It is based on the second phrase in Exodus 6:6 "I will rescue you from their bondage." Paul speaks in Colossians about being rescued and redeemed through Yeshua.

Colossians 1:13-14 NKJV 13 He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, 14 in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.

The third cup of the Seder is the Cup of Redemption. This cup is established in the final phrase of verse six: "I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments." This third cup is part of the blessing following the Seder meal and is sometimes referred to as the cup of blessing. Matthew record the disciples partaking of this third cup.

Matthew 26:27-29 NKJV 27 Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. 28 "For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. 29 "But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom."

Redemption would imply that a ransom is being paid such as the purchase of a family member releasing them from slavery. The Cup of Redemption reminds us of the price paid by Yeshua for our redemption from slavery to sin.

1 Peter 1:18-19 NKJV 18 knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, 19 but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.

The fourth cup is derived from verse seven. "I will take you as My people, and I will be your God." This is much like the marriage practice in ancient Israel where the husband to be would make a public declaration, "You will

be my wife, I will be your husband.” Sometimes this cup is known as the Cup of Praise because after partaking of it the Hillel or praise psalms are sung. First Fruits of Zion in Shadows of the Messiah summarize the Messianic implications of this fourth cup as well as the others.

“The Cup of Betrothal reminds us of our betrothal to Messiah, the ultimate bridegroom. It reminds us of the wedding cup shared by the bride and groom under the wedding canopy, and it reminds us of our great hope in Yeshua, the wedding supper of the Lamb. In Messiah we are sanctified, delivered, redeemed, and betrothed.”ⁱⁱ

There are three remaining promises in God’s opening statement to Moses.

Exodus 6:7b-8 NKJV 7b ...Then you shall know that I am the LORD your God who brings you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. 8 'And I will bring you into the land which I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and I will give it to you as a heritage: I am the LORD.'"

The traditional Passover Seder calls for a fifth cup known as the Elijah Cup. The origin of the inclusion of this cup is somewhat obscure and the sages disagree on its origin and purpose. It represents a kind of fifth expression of redemption. It is said that Elijah will come before Messiah. According to scripture, Elijah did not die, but was taken up into heaven.

2 Kings 2:11 NKJV 11 Then it happened, as they continued on and talked, that suddenly a chariot of fire appeared with horses of fire, and separated the two of them; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

The Passover Seder is all about redemption and it is naturally anticipated that the final redemption will occur at Passover. The apostle John in revelation says that one of the two witnesses in Jerusalem will have the power of Elijah and call down fire from heaven.

Revelation 11:3-6 NKJV 3 "And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth." 4 These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands standing before the God of the earth. 5 And if anyone wants to harm them, fire proceeds from their mouth and devours their enemies. And if anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this manner. 6 These have power to shut heaven, so that no rain falls in the days of their prophecy; and they have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to strike the earth with all plagues, as often as they desire.

So, at the Seder, we pour the cup for Elijah and perhaps even set a place at the table for him in anticipation of the final redemption and the return of Messiah Yeshua. These three remaining promises not only speak to the children of Israel at the time of the exodus, but also speak to the return of Yeshua and the final redemption at the end of the age.

In telling Moses what He will do for the children of Israel, God is revealing the nature of His identity defined in the name LORD or Yehovah. The very structure of Exodus six through eight tells the complete redemption story. I mentioned at the beginning of this teaching that there is a kind of chiasm to be found here. There is also a parallelism that places greater emphasis on the chiasm’s central theme. Let’s take a look by first reading it again.

Exodus 6:6-8 NKJV 6 "Therefore say to the children of Israel: 'I am the LORD; I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, I will rescue you from their bondage, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. 7 'I will take you as My people, and I will be your God.

Then you shall know that I am the LORD your God who brings you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. 8 'And I will bring you into the land which I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and I will give it to you as a heritage: I am the LORD.'"

The chiasm breaks down as follows:

A: 'I am the LORD; I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians

B: I will rescue you from their bondage

C: (The central theme) I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments.

B: 'I will take you as My people, and I will be your God

A: Then you shall know that I am the LORD your God who brings you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.

Verse eight contains the parallelism which places greater emphasis on the central theme of redemption in the chiasm.

Exodus 6:8 'And I will bring you into the land which I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and I will give it to you as a heritage: I am the LORD.'"

When we look closely at these statements by God, we begin to see the deeper meaning and the prophetic nature of His words to Moses. God was laying out his master plan for redemption. Not only the redemption of the children of Israel suffering under the oppression of the Egyptians, but for the final redemption of all mankind at the end of the age.

God revealed a new name to Moses. A name which reveals His nature as a God who remembers His covenants. A God who will redeem His people then, now, and in the future. In the name Yehovah, God reveals his compassion and His judgments. God will not only rescue His people from their bondage but will bring them to the promised land, a place of rest.

Study Questions:

1. Three times in this passage God announces that "I AM the LORD." Where else in the Bible does God Announce Himself in this way? What are the circumstances and the state of the children of Israel at the times God makes this declaration?
2. In what ways do God's actions through Moses in dealing with Pharaoh and the Egyptians, parallel the two witnesses of Revelation?
3. This passage of Exodus is central to the celebration of the Passover. How does each of the four cups (five if you include the Elijah Cup) of the Passover reflect the final redemption at the return of Messiah Yeshua?
4. What does it mean to be sanctified? How does God sanctify us as believers? How should we respond to God's sanctification of us?
5. What are the attributes of God that He is revealing to Moses and the children of Israel with revelation of the name LORD, or Yehovah?

6. What were some other mysteries of Messiah that were revealed in this teaching and this Torah portion? (You can include parts of the portion not covered in this teaching) What new insight did you gain from this teaching? How do you respond to this new insight? How will you realign your life based on this new understanding?

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ⁱ FFOZ Shadows of the Messiah, D.T. Lancaster, Vol 2 p239

ⁱⁱ FFOZ Shadows of the Messiah, D.T. Lancaster, Vol 2 p336